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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Application No.: 10/663,148

Confirmation No.: 2154

Applicant: Deborah A. Belser

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Docket No.: 426.44

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Mail Stop Missing Parts
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Arlington, VA 22313-1450

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Sir:

In response to the Notice of Missing Parts of Nonprovisional Application mailed December 10, 2003 and responsive to the Notice of Incomplete Reply (Nonprovisional) mailed April 9, 2004, Applicant submits the following Preliminary Amendment.

The amendments and remarks relate to the deletion of references to the omitted Figure 5 and the renumbering of the originally filed figures, as well as to the corresponding changes in the originally filed Specification.

Prior to the examination of this patent application, please enter the following amendments and consider the following remarks and attachments.

Amendments to the Specification:

Please delete Page 3, lines ¹⁶15 and ¹⁷16.

Please replace Page 3, line ¹⁷17 with the following amended sentence:

FIGURE 5 is a top plane view of the packaging system shown in FIGURE 4;

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Fig. 8). The top 44 further preferably includes a pair of locator tabs 58 that extend from the wall 54 that are designed and adapted to guide the planar portion 56 of the bottom 42 into the seat portion 52 of the top 44 during closure of the shell 41.

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Please replace the paragraph beginning at Page ⁸~~8~~, line ²⁶~~10~~ with the following amended paragraph:

Referring now to Fig. 5, to facilitate opening of the shell 41, the bottom 42 and top 44 include opening tabs 60, 62, respectively. According to the invention, the bottom opening tab 60 is configured and positioned to align with the planar tab region 64 on the top 44 when the shell 41 is in a closed position. The top opening tab 62 is similarly configured and positioned to align with the planar tab region 66 on the bottom 42 when the shell 41 is in a closed position. The noted opening tabs 60, 62 thus facilitate easy opening of the shell 41 by a user.

Amendments to the Drawings:

A replacement set of drawings, marked as "Replacement Sheet", are submitted herewith as Exhibit A.

To originally filed Figure 4 has been added elements 54, 58, and 51, which appear elsewhere in originally filed figures.

Originally filed Figure 6 has been sequentially renumbered to Figure 5 and element 51 has been added. Element 51 appeared elsewhere in originally filed figures.

Originally filed Figure 7 has been sequentially renumbered to Figure 6.

Originally filed Figure 8 has been sequentially renumbered to Figure 7 and element 51 has been added. Element 51 appeared elsewhere in originally filed figures.

Originally filed Figure 9 has been sequentially renumbered to Figure 8.

Remarks

No new matter is believed to be added by this amendment.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to enter these amendments prior to examination. Applicants are unaware of any Office Action at the time of submission of this Preliminary Amendment.

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of three (3) cleaning heads 20 having a maximum planar dimension or, in this instance, a nominal diameter in the range of 2.75 – 3.25 in.

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Please replace the paragraph beginning at Page 8, line ~~12~~²⁹ with the following amended paragraph:

Referring now to Fig. 5, the cavities 46, 48 are preferably disposed in the bottom 42 and top 44 of the shell 41 in an offset orientation to facilitate closure of the shell 41 with cleaning heads 20 disposed therein. As will be appreciated by one having ordinary skill in the art, the amount of the offset (designated "O") will depend on the dimensions of the cleaning head(s) and, hence, each cavity 46, 48. Preferably, the offset ("O") is in the range of approximately 25 – 45% of the maximum planar dimension (e.g., nominal diameter) of the cleaning head(s) 20.

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Please replace the paragraph beginning at Page 8, line ~~19~~³ with the following amended paragraph:

Referring now to Figs. 4, 5 and 7, each cavity 46, 48 includes a plurality of interference tabs 50 that are positioned and configured to engage and secure the cleaning heads 20 in the cavities. As illustrated in Fig. 5, the tabs 50 are preferably disposed as opposing pairs to engage a respective cleaning head 20 proximate its horizontal axis (designated "A" in Fig. 5). Thus, in the embodiment shown in Figs. 4 and 5 and described above, each cavity 46, 48 includes three (3) pairs of tabs 50 (or six (6) total tabs 50).

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Please replace the paragraph beginning at Page 8, line ~~30~~¹⁴ with the following amended paragraph:

In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the face of each tab 50 (designated generally "51") has a textured surface to enhance the engagement and retention of the cleaning head 20 positioned therebetween. As will be appreciated by one having ordinary skill in the art, various conventional molding and post molding processes can be employed to provide a textured surface to the tab faces 51. In one embodiment of the invention, the textured surface is achieved via a sand or other medium blasting operation.

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Please replace the paragraph beginning at Page ~~9~~⁸, line ~~4~~²⁰ with the following amended paragraph:

As illustrated in Figs. 4 and 5, the top 44 includes a seat portion 52, having a peripheral wall 54 that is configured and dimensioned to receive the top, planar portion 56 of the bottom 42 when the shell 41 is in a closed configuration (see

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Please replace Page 3, line ¹²~~18~~ with the following amended sentence:

FIGURE 6 is a side plane view of the packaging system shown in FIGURE 4;

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Please replace Page 3, lines ¹³~~19 and 20~~ with the following amended sentence:

FIGURE 7 is a partial section, side plane view of the packaging system, illustrating the interference fit of a disposable cleaning head, according to the invention; and

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Please replace Page 3, lines ¹⁴~~21~~ and ¹⁵~~22~~ with the following amended sentence:

FIGURE 8 is a perspective view of the packaging system shown in FIGURE 4, in a closed position, according to the invention.

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Please replace the paragraph beginning at Page 7, line ³~~17~~ with the following amended paragraph:

Referring now to Figs. 4 – 8, the packaging system of the invention will now be described in detail. Referring first to Fig. 4, there is shown one embodiment of the packaging system 40. As illustrated in Fig. 4, the packaging system 40 comprises a shell 41 having a bottom 42 and top 44 that is preferably hingedly connected (designated generally 43 in Fig. 6) to the bottom 42.

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Please replace the paragraph beginning at Page 7, line ⁸~~24~~ with the following amended paragraph:

In a preferred embodiment, the bottom 42 includes a first cavity 46 and the top 44 includes a second cavity 48. The cavities 46, 48 preferably have substantially similar planar dimensions (i.e., length, width) and configurations (see Fig. 5).

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Please replace the paragraph beginning at Page ⁷~~8~~, line ²¹~~4~~ with the following amended paragraph:

According to the invention, the cavities 46, 48 can comprise various configurations and dimensions to receive various configurations, sizes and quantities of cleaning heads 20 (e.g., 2, 8, 12, etc.). In one embodiment of the invention, each cavity 46, 48 has a length (designated "L") in the range of approximately 7.5 – 8.0 in., a width proximate the opening (designated "W") in the range of approximately 2.5 – 3.0 in. and a minimum depth (designated "D") in the range of approximately 1.25 – 1.35 in. (see Figs. 5 and 7) to facilitate receipt